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possessing such marked contrast to his former life that the enticement is great enough to persuade the slow worker of fields to break the customary bonds? Trade, industry, and warfare have always acted as a powerful stimulus upon the slumbering migratory instincts of the country population, and the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are the times, when this stimulus exercised its most potent influence and the chances were the best for the lower classes gravitating into freedom and fortune.

A. M. WERGELAND.

Der Arbeiterschutz bei Vergebung öffentlicher Arbeiten und Lieferungen. (Bericht des k. k. arbeitsstatistischen Amtes über die auf diesem Gebiete in den europäischen und überseeischen Industriestaaten unternommenen Versuche und bestehenden Vorschriften.) Wien: Kaiserlich-königliche Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1900. 8vo, pp. x + 163.

WITHIN a score of years an essentially new agency for the protection of workmen against possible hardship at the hands of their employers has come into use in many parts of Europe and America. The control over industry which the state exercises as a sovereign authority has come to be supplemented by its power as a consumer, for, like other consumers (like the "Consumers' League," for instance), the state or municipality may prescribe conditions as to the labor by which its wants are supplied—letting contracts for printing, army supplies, building, etc., only to persons willing to grant to their workmen advantages stipulated in the contracts.

This power has been employed for purposes ranging widely from the care of the laborers' health to the regulation of their wages or hours of daily service. Its rightfulness as to many of these purposes is generally conceded, even where the doctrine of free contract between laborers and employers has been held most strongly. Dispute centers now chiefly about the regulation of wages and hours of labor, and in a large part of the European world the question as to these points has not merely been raised, but answered; and it has become an established principle that in letting contracts the public authority is to be employed frankly as an instrument for influencing wages to the advantage of the wage-earner. Employers have frequently favored the insertion of a wages-minimum in government contracts as a restraint upon

excessive competition. The distinction of first doing this seems to belong to the city of Brussels. In 1855 it appeared that wages there had scarcely varied since 1804, in spite of the rise of prices following the gold discoveries. The authorities of the city, therefore (at the advice of the building contractors), inserted in all building contracts a clause fixing a minimum rate of wages. In other countries it has more recently become a frequent rule of such contracts that wages must be as high as those prevailing in the given place and trade. Efforts to secure legislation fixing wages according to some ideal standard not necessarily corresponding to the prevailing rate have succeeded only in certain of the English colonies and in America. The demand that work be done directly by the public authority, without the intervention of contractors, has also been complied with in certain cases, while in France and Italy, but more generally in New Zealand, contracts have been let directly to co-operative associations of workmen.

The Austrian Bureau of Labor Statistics has undertaken, for the guidance of its own government, an inquiry regarding this sort of protection to laborers in various countries. The volume, as here offered, contains much useful information, though it shows the defects usual in such compilations. Thus it would be of interest to know how far the legislation which it describes (in the United States, for instance) is enforced, and how far it serves only the purpose of satisfying importunate voters.

A. P. WINSTON.

La protection ouvrière au Japon, projet de loi et enquête personnelle. Par KASHIRO SAÏTO, Commissaire-adjoint du Japon a l'exposition universelle de 1900, Chargé du service du Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Commerce. Paris: Larose et Forcel, 1900. Svo, pp. 189.

THIS little book will be of interest especially to students of labor conditions and of economic legislation. The modest purpose of the author, which was well carried out under some difficulties while he was acting as commissioner at the Paris Exposition, was to explain and comment upon the law for the protection of labor in Japan, which went into effect July 1, in the thirty-second year of Meiji (this appears to be 1899). In 1897 he made a personal inquiry into labor conditions,